Margaret Macdiarmid

—OR—

BEAN A CHREIDIMH MHOIR

THIRD EDITION

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—BY—

Rev. ALEXANDER MACRAE

TONGUE.

H.M. 320 (6).

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"O woman, great is thy faith."—Jesus.

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(BEAN A CHREIDIMH MHOIR)

OR

Mrs. Mackay of Sheiggira
and of Melness

BY

Rev. ALEXANDER MACRAE, Tongue
Author of the "Life of Dr. Aird," etc.

THIRD EDITION

The Highland Christian Literature Society,
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1929

"Told for a memorial of her."

Matthew xxvi. 13.

All profits on the sale of this booklet go to a Fund for the erection of a suitable Memorial of Mrs. Mackay.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

MRS. MACKAY, familiarly known throughout the North as Bean a Chreidimh Mhoir, was so interesting a personality and such a distinguished Christian that after a century her memory is still fresh and fragrant. Those who knew her personally and who have written regarding her have used language which at first may seem highly extravagant but which fuller knowledge of her fully justifies.

Dr. Kennedy, in "The Days of the Fathers," p. 169, says: "She was one among a thousand. Her brilliant wit, her exuberant spirits, her intense originality of thought and speech and manner, her great faith and her fervent love, formed a combination but rarely found."

Mr. Sage wrote in "Memorabilia Domestica," p. 283: "There were a few individuals of whom I have the most pleasing recollections. . . . The most distinguished as a Christian was Mrs. MacKay of Sheiggira. . . . She was naturally a superior woman, quick in apprehension and particularly ready in repartee, especially so when provoked by ungodly taunts and sneers. She was above all things, however, distinguished for the vitality of her Christian character."

The Rev. Eric Findlater, of Lochearnhead, who knew her intimately from boyhood, wrote: "The glory of God seemed to have been her chief end; though mingling in the world, she was not of the world, as the most careless could notice; her conversation was in heaven, and she was truly an epistle unto Christ, known and read of all men."

Still more cordial are the sentiments of the Rev. William Findlater, of Durness, who knew her better than any other of her contemporaries. After he had passed his 66th birthday, and during the trying period that immediately succeeded the Disruption, he composed a beautiful elegy in her memory consisting of forty-one double verses, in which he portrayed her life and character, in incisive language, and with real sympathy and insight.

She represents a type of religion which prevailed generally throughout the North Highlands during the period of the evangelical revival in the first half of the nineteenth century, and which was associated with such names as Dr. MacDonald, Mr. John Kennedy, Mr. John MacRae, and Mr. Roderick MacLeod. It had its roots in a definite experience of conversion, and in a conscieus dependence on the presence of the Holy Spirit for the maintenance of the life of grace in the soul. The source of its life and the object of its affection and inspiration was the Lord Jesus Christ, crucified, risen, glorified, and ever present to the believing consciousness of His people. There are many who hold that nothing better could happen for the life of our land than a revival of such a type of living religion.

HER CONVERSION.

Towards the end of the 18th century, Margaret MacDiarmid came from Argyll to Sutherland along with her brother, Colin, who was employed as a deer stalker in the Reay Forest. Their father is believed to have been a Perthshire man. Their mother was a daughter of Colin Campbell, of Glenure, a man of high standing in the religious and social life of Argyll in his day and the grandfather of the Rev. Principal Peter Colin Campbell, D.D., of Aberdeen University.

They had not been very long in the district when her brother was drowned. In order to intercept a herd of deer he ventured to cross an arm of a loch on ice. According to tradition it was Loch Stack. Peggy, as she was familiarly known, was already engaged to a young man Donald MacKay, of Sheiggira, in the parish of Kinlochbervie. They married, and she lived in Sheiggira during a considerable period of her married life, where their children were born and reared.

The tragic death of her beloved brother was to her a desolating blow. Her grief was deep and sore, and even her marriage did not relieve her gloom. What she may have thought of death and of her own preparedness for it and for all that it implies is not known. But that solemn event awakened her to real concern. Her natural grief deepened into conviction of personal sin and of soul sorrow, and she began to seek the Lord.

At that time the Rev. John Kennedy, afterwards minister of Killearnan, the father of the celebrated Dr. John Kennedy, of Dingwall, was missionary at Eriboll, and it was part of his duty to preach at Kinlochbervie every third or fourth Sabbath. The Lord used his preaching to the conversion and comforting of many in the district

Among these was Peggy. She passed out of darkness into God's marvellous light, and she became at once a bright and shining witness to the saving grace of God.

Her circumstances, however, were far from helpful to progress in religious knowledge and holiness of life. Such occasional spiritual ministry as came within her reach was fully used by her keen and eager soul. The wells of salvation were graciously opened for her in the Scriptures, and out of them she drank with joy.

It was in those days she used to walk barefooted through the moor by Gualin to Durness to hear Mr. Findlater, and to walk back at night —a distance of fully fourteen miles each way. She carried her boots and put them on again at some distance from the church. On one occasion she found she had only one. She had lost the other in the moor. What was she to do? Was she to go to church barefoot was the thought that naturally rose to her mind? "You devil," she exclaimed, addressing the evil one that made the suggestion, "you thought you would cheat me out of the service to-day, but I'll put my pride where my boots should be—under my feet," and, so saying, she walked to church in her stocking soles! She found her lost boot on her way home again.

Her husband, though always kind to her, was not in the Kingdom of God himself; her children were young and needing her loving care; the work of the home and of the farm was exacting, and years of hard work and of want of spiritual help and comfort was a discipline which threw her more and more into secret communion with God and His Word for the life and light she needed. It was a hard school in which she developed that whole-hearted trust in God which so distinguished her in after years.

Her husband was led to the Lord by her prayers. He was opposed to her wandering, as he called it, to communions and other religious gatherings. The preaching of the Gospel was life to her soul. He could not understand her hunger for it. On one occasion, after a heated argument, she retired into the barn to pray. He followed, and overheard her passionate tones as she pled for his conversion. That was the first thing that moved him to repentance and to seek the Lord for himself.

Long afterwards she said of him: "He was just made for me by the Lord's own hand; the grace he had not at first has now been given him, and he will allow me to wander for bread to my soul wherever I can find it."

Of his pre-converted days the following story is told. A ship that traded in smuggled brandy had been wrecked on the coast, and some casks came ashore on the beach at Sheiggira. Mac-Kay's neighbours, the Morrisons, were away at a market, and, during the night, he yoked the black pony and removed three or the kegs to a place of concealment in the sand. Presently he was seized by severe abdominal pains—a not unlikely thing in the circumstances—and nothing could give him relief. After acute suffering, Peggy, who was not supposed to have known anything about the kegs, said to him: "You can get no relief till you yoke the black pony again and return the kegs you have hid to where you found them." He knew she was in the secret, rose quietly, and did what she told him. Peace and rest followed.

Then there took place one of those lamentable events which had so tried and harried the life of the people of Sutherland in the first half of the 19th century—a clearance. Sheiggira has good

arable and pasture land with a large outrun. The tenants had been long established there, and had a specially comfortable living. The Estate evicted them and turned the land into a sheep run. The poor people were sent adrift to find a home wherever they could. The MacKays were allowed to settle in Achininver, Melness, in the parish of Tongue. So Peggy came to Melness, no longer a young woman, but with her soul schooled to trust the providence and grace of an over-ruling and an all-wise and all-loving Father.

When crossing Tongue ferry the Duke's principal agent responsible for these clearances was on the boat. Peggy remonstrated with him for his part in those callous and cruel proceedings. He tried to defend himself by saying that, as the evictions had been determined upon someone had to execute them; if he had not done it someone else would have. "Yes," she retorted, "truly the Son of man goeth as it was determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed."

HER PERSONAL APPEARANCE.

Hers was a beautiful countenance. Her hair was dark brown, almost black, and wavy. She had brilliant black eyes. In her youth they had the natural sparkle of health, and, as life matured, the light of holy love that glowed in her soul shone in her eyes. The pure white skin, the high broad forehead, and the oval contour of a bright and sunny face, made her the centre of attraction in youthful circles when she was a girl. She was full of fun.

" But it's not her hair, her form, her face,
Tho' matching beauty's fabled queen;
'Tis the mind that shined in every grace,
An' chiefly in her rogueish een."

She owed little to art and nothing to artfulness. Her handiest mirror was often the surface of a pail of water. She had another mirror into which she loved to gaze with adoring eyes that turned in criticism on herself. From that mirror, and from such soul toilet, she was never long away. She was careless about dress and outward personal appearance, but she bore herself with such native grace and dignity that she never appeared slovenly or even dowdy. There was

" Something in her gait
Gars ony dress look weel."

From some of the stories told of her it might be inferred that she did pay some attention to dress and even affected gay colours. Passing home from Caithness she asked a woman whom she casually met where she came from. On being told she came from Armadale, she said: " Then you know the queen." " The Queen," said the other. " Who is she? " " Jean," she replied, referring to a pious woman known by everyone as " Shine Armadail." " Yes, I do

know Jean," said the other. Peggy took half a crown out of her purse and gave it to the woman saying: "Give her that with my regards." "Who shall I say sent it to her?" the woman asked. She smilingly replied, "Say it is from Cailleach nan ribeanan dearg" (*i.e.,* The woman of the red ribbons). The reference may not have been to a fondness for red ribbons on her part, but to an old harvest season custom. There used to be great emulation as to who should have the harvest in first, for whoever was last, according to an unwritten law, came under an obligation, in case of a famine in spring, to feed all the rest! The last sheaf was tied with a red ribbon and hung upon a nail above the kitchen fire till spring, and was called "Cailleach nan Ribeanan Dearg. On the first day of spring ploughing it was taken down and given as a hansel for luck to the horses. It was like our Peggy to refer to Jean as the Queen and to herself as a mere wisp of straw hung up to wither in the smoke!

She made everything a matter of prayer, even her dress. When she needed a new dress she prayed for it. She gave thanks for the robe of righteousness and the garments of salvation with which the Lord had clothed her soul, and then prayed for suitable raiment for the body. When the prayer was ended, her daughter, who had overheard her, said: "If you would ask father he would give you a new dress." "Perhaps he might," was her reply, "but my heavenly Father will give it, and He will never cast it up to me."

Passing through Bettyhill on a beautiful morning, when the glory of God seemed to be fully disclosed on the face of nature, Peggy was happy in meditation, and transported by the glories revealed without and within. She was carrying her hat in her hand by its ribbon strings and twirling it round and round—that is how she

often wore her hats. "What is your news this morning?" she said to a man who was herding his cows at the roadside. "I have no news," he replied in his dull bucolic way. She caught him by the shoulder, and looking into his eyes, trying to reach and awake his soul, she said: "Man, is it not good news that you are still alive in the land of mercy?" and passed on into a house. He looked after her in a maze, and when she left the house he went to the door and enquired: "Co i an onseach a bha sud?" ("What fool of a woman was yon?")—a fool for Christ.

It was with reference to her dress that she gave utterance to the saying by which she is most widely known. When travelling by stage coach her fellow-passengers were amused by her attire and manner. One of them ventured to ask where she came from. "I came from Cape Wrath," she answered. "And where are you going?" "I am going to the Cape of Good Hope," was her quick reply, which at first somewhat mystified her questioner.

He was not kept long in doubt, however, for Peggy got her opportunity to speak of the deep things of God and the soul. They were soon discussing the universality of sin, the sinfulness of the human heart and the necessity of the new birth. The gentleman did not admit that his heart was evil. He stoutly maintained the innocence of his mind and the purity of his disposition and motives. As the coach lumbered on it gave a sudden lurch, which had the effect of throwing a box off the roof. It broke in pieces on the road, and, to the amusement of the passengers, a number of live chickens flew out. "Did you know before it fell what was inside that box?" she asked her fellow-traveller. "No," he replied innocently. "Neither can you know what is in your heart till it is broken open to the Spirit of Truth."

HER PERSONALITY.

Hers was a singularly attractive personality. The vivacity of her spirit, the sprightliness of her wit, the incessant animation of her countenance, revealing the activity of her mind; the compression of her mouth, indicating the earnestness and sincerity of her soul; the tender kindliness of her soft voice, that spoke of the love of her heart; and the peculiar cordiality of her greeting, gave her a magnetic power over others, which was, if not unique, very rare. Children would look after her with a loving respect. They would drop their play and gather round to listen to her serious talk, often playfully spoken. Her piety did not scare them; it drew them. She spoke to them about Jesus with the naturalness of one speaking about a mutual friend, and with a love that was engaging.

The genuineness of her piety disarmed criticism. Even those who had little sympathy with her ways and with her views of the truth always regarded her with respect and admiration. Her presence in a congregation radiated goodwill and spiritual joy. Mr. Eric Findlater, who, when a boy, used to watch her from the manse pew in his father's church, wrote :—" When she entered a worshipping congregation her very appearance would circulate a wave of joy over the faces of all —a circumstance that could not escape a stranger's notice, though he could not account for it." His father put the same thought in verse, somewhat after this fashion—

Preachers and people seeing thee
At worship on the Mount,
Sang out with sweeter melody,
Revived on thy account.

The enchantment of thy presence,
Re-echoed in their song,
Revealed that of the wine of life
Thou drankest deep and long.

Like the holy women of old, she came on the first day of the week bearing the spices she had prepared, the fragrance of which was felt by all who truly worshipped along with her.

Her quick wit and power of repartee were gifts she possessed to an uncommon degree. People were attracted by these, and yet were afraid of them. Her sharpest thrusts, however, never left a sore feeling, for they were always prompted by love, and on the side of righteousness and truth.

When leaving Glendhu, after a visit to Mr. Gunn, he accompanied her to the gateway, which was closed by loose spars across the road. When he was in the act of removing one of the spars she bent down and darted through. "Is that how you expect to enter the Kingdom?" he asked. "Yes," said she, "and if you expect to enter it you must bend your head also."

There was a thoughtful man in Oldshore, known as Uilleam Buidhe, to whom Peggy said, "Well, Uilleam, I wonder if you can tell me where all the fairies, ghosts, and evil spirits have gone that people used to see when we were young, for we do not see them now." "I am sure I do not know," said Uilleam, "unless the people have swallowed them, and they now live in their hearts." "I dare say you are right, Uilleam," she remarked. "Many a true saying have I heard falling from simple lips, and I did not expect to hear such wisdom even from you."

On a communion Sabbath evening the conversation took a worldly turn which Peggy thought

unbecoming. She said nothing, but bent down under the table as if looking for something. Her host asked if she had lost anything. " I thought we all had lost the Sabbath," was her quiet reply, which had the desired effect.

When the solemnities of a Highland communion season are ended with the thanksgiving service on Monday, there are few companies, as a rule, more joyously happy than those of the manse study or drawing-room. Theirs is the joy of elevated thought. It is, at any rate, a natural rebound of spirit, which may very naturally and easily become worldly and frivolous, unless some strong and wise personality exercises a restraining influence.

Being at dinner in a manse on such an occasion, Peggy felt that the conversation was of too frivolous a nature, after the solemn privileges they had been enjoying, and she ventured to make a remark about it. The Rev. Dr. Ross, of Lochbroom, who was present, remarked that the Apostle Paul did not allow women to speak in public. " Indeed, sir," she retorted, " if the Apostle Paul were here no woman had any need to speak."

At a fellowship meeting in the house of George Brotchie, Thurso, Alexander Keith, of Dunbeath, wishing to draw a smart saying from her, asked: " What opinion have you been led to form of the woman of Samaria? " " Indeed." she replied, " I never entertained a high opinion of her." " That astonishes me," he said, " for did she not say to the people, ' Come, see a Man that told me all things that ever I did? Is not this the Christ? ' " " All that is very true," she said, " but when the Lord first met her she declined to give him a drink of cold water."

Among her first visits to Caithness on communion occasions, and before she became generally known, she called at a manse and asked to see the minister. The housekeeper told her he was then engaged getting ready for the service, and could not see her. "Then I shall leave my basket here in the kitchen and call for it after the service." After service she went back but was told the minister had company and could not see her. She persisted, however, and the minister went to the kitchen to see her. He asked her what she wanted, and she told him: "I want to learn the Lord's prayer, and I thought you might teach me." "Well, yes," he said, "sit down." She did so, and he went on: "Say, 'Our Father which art in heaven.'" "Our Father which art in heaven," she repeated. "Have I a Father in heaven?" "Yes." "And have you a Father in heaven?" "Yes." "And is my Father in heaven your Father in heaven?" "Yes." "Then you and I must be brother and sister." "Yes," he admitted. "Then if a sister came to see a brother, would it be a brother's part not to receive her?" The identity of his visitor then dawned upon him and he showed Bean a Chreidimh Mhoir into the dining-room.

HER GREAT FAITH.

Mr. Sage, in *Memorabilia Domestica,* relates a conversation he had with her. Speaking of the name by which she had become popularly known, "The Woman of Great Faith," she said that was a character she did not wish to take from others, nor even to realise for herself. He observed that a great God was justly entitled to great faith on our part on account of the greatness of His own truth and of His promises. "True," said she, "but my desire is only to be enabled to exercise a little faith in a great God." "How so?" he asked. "Because I need to behold that greatness, not in my faith, but in Himself," was her reply.

Her faith in God was the simple trust of a child in a father. He was always near her. He spoke to her in the scenes of nature and in the events of providence. Heaven was her Father's throne; earth was His footstool. The sun, moon, and stars were standing witnesses of His ever acting power and of His ever watchful presence The stream that babbled past her door had for her a constant message. It repeated the word—Eternity, Eternity, Eternity. The thunder was her Father's voice. In an extraordinary thunderstorm some one remarked that she showed no sense of fear. "Why should I be afraid to hear my Father's voice calling from the third loft?' was her trustful reply.

That spirit of childlike trust in her Father's loving will to bless was revealed in her prayers. Prayer was not for her a formal occasional exercise, but a constant, loving, and believing attitude and exercise of soul in her Father's fellowship. Her prayers expressed thanksgiving and praise for mercies enjoyed. They abounded in intercession for others. She seldom asked any-

thing for herself. To some one who made a remark to her on that point she said: "I am only a messenger pleading for others in the Saviour's name, and I remember that when I used to do messages for my father he sometimes gave me a halfpenny for myself though I did not ask for it."

There is a large gray stone in Sheiggira called Clach Pheggie, because she was in the habit of resorting to its side for meditation and prayer.

From the day of her redemption she never seemed to have any doubt as to the saving and keeping power of God. Her faith in Him was absolute as the God of Providence. Whatever she asked of Him in her need she unquestioningly believed she would receive. Her Father in heaven would supply all her needs, both spiritual and temporal. She used to hold up her open empty purse and say, "Jehovah-Jireh," and meet every reference to her personal needs by saying, "The children ought not to provide for the fathers, but the fathers for the children, and it is not the Heavenly Father that will fail to do so." No sooner, however, was her purse well filled than she emptied it again. She always met worthy people more needy than herself. The gifts of God to her were not for her own exclusive use. She was but the steward of His manifold riches. She gave as she received, freely. On her way to Edinburgh she was the guest of Mr. Kennedy at the Manse of Killearnan; and "hearing that the Sacrament of the Supper was to be dispensed at Kirkhill on the following week, she resolved to attend it, and to postpone her visit to the South till after it was over. She went, and on Monday a gentleman made up to her, after the close of the service, who handed to her a sum of money, at the request of a lady who had been moved to offer her the gift. Mrs.

MacKay gratefully accepted it, but being accompanied on her way back to Killearnan by a group of worthies, all of whom she knew to be poor, she divided all the money among them, assured that it was for them she received it, and that provision for her journey would be made by some other hand. Her expectation was realised, and a sum fully sufficient was given to her, and she started on her journey to the south." *

On one of her many journeys she stayed for a night at an inn, where she was not known. It is said to be the case that many people arrived at an inn at night, with money in their pockets, who woke up next morning to find that they had none. Peggy found herself in that plight, and when her bill was presented she could not pay it. She looked at the maid and said, " The Lord will provide." The maid, not understanding Peggy's meaning, said : " Just wait here a minute till I go and see." There happened to be a certain lord occupying a suite of rooms upstairs, to whom the maid thought Peggy referred. She went straight to him and presented Peggy's bill, with explanations. His lordship came down to see this person that presumed to take such liberties with him. He was not long in her company when the bill was paid and her empty purse replenished, though she asked for nothing.

At that time there was a change of drivers at each (coach) stage, and at every halt " Remember the coachman " was called out at the window. Mrs. MacKay invariably gave a silver coin and a good advice to each of the drivers. Her companions, not liking to be outdone by their strange fellow-passenger, and liking still less to part so freely with their money, at last remonstrated. " We cannot afford to give silver always," one of

* In the Days of the Fathers.

them said, " and we cannot keep pace with your liberality." " The King's daughter must travel as becomes her rank," she said, as she again handed the silver coin and spoke the golden advice to the driver.*

She regarded nothing that was given her, or that she possessed, as her own. It was hers only to be used for the good of those who had need. This habit often caused misunderstanding, and sometimes gave pain to her best friends. When her daughter was on the eve of getting married, the two set out to make some purchases for the interesting event. They had but the sum of seven pounds to spend. By the way they fell in with a man who was threatened with eviction for arrears of rent. He told Peggy his distressing story. Five pounds would tide him over his difficulties and stay proceedings. Much against her daughter's wishes, as may well be imagined, she gave that sum to the man, but before arriving where the shopping was to be done gifts amounting to ten pounds were handed to her.

In those days people were in the habit of killing a cow or bullock at the beginning of the winter season. The flesh was pickled and preserved for family use. On one occasion, when the cow was killed, Peggy had so many friends to whom she wished to send a bit of meat that very soon the whole carcase was disposed of. There was only one piece left, and she had marked it out for some one. Some member of her household was in the act of protesting that if she gave that away there would be nothing left for themselves, when one of the lads came in announcing that their best bullock had fallen and broken his neck. Peggy lifted her heart in thanksgiving, saying : " Praise to Thee, Thou rich Provider, Thou hast selected

* In the Days of the Fathers.

this from the herd that would miss it least," and sent her messenger on her errand with the last remaining piece of beef.

On being presented with a small bag of apples she was told not to take the string off till she reached home. She promised she would not. By the way, however, she met some one to whom the apples would be a greater treat than to herself, and remembering her promise not to take the string off the bag, she cut the bottom out of it and gave the apples away.

The strength of her faith was especially revealed when passing through trial and under the shadows of death. She then showed entire acquiescence in the will of God, and however sore her mother heart must have been she was not known to murmur at the events of His holy providence. When one of her sons was drowned near her home, the sorrow of her heart was great, but the words, "He that spared not His own Son but gave Him up for us all," checked any feelings of bitterness that may have mingled with her sorrow, and she never uttered a word of complaint. A friend who went to express sympathy was met by a smiling face and a most cheerful spirit. The friend expressed the surprise she felt, remarking: "I am surprised you can look so cheerful in your sad circumstances." "You know," was the beautiful reply, "we ought always to return a loan with a smile."

She frequented the house of sorrow to express her sympathy and to minister comfort, as few could so wisely and so lovingly do, and to take advantage of the opportunity, while hearts were tender, to win them for the Saviour's love. At such times her knowledge of the Scriptures and her wisdom in applying them brought a word in season to many. She travelled many a mile to visit the sick. She felt that if she could speak a

word of comfort to any trembling soul she was doing a Christ-like service. There was a gentleness, a kindliness, and a fortitude of spirit shown by her that communicated a comforting feeling to the patients. At the bedside of the dying she was always bright and cheerful. There was no sign of grief or gloom as she pointed the dying to the living Redeemer.

She was a true and eager soul winner. The late Donald Gow, of Melness, used to tell that when he was in spiritual darkness and soul distress till he could endure it no longer, he went to interview her. She persuaded him to stay overnight. In the morning the sun rose on Donald. His darkness passed away, and, henceforth, he was known as a man who walked in the light of the Lord.

She accompanied him back to Skinnet, where there was a tinker's encampment, to which she went on some errand. She probably made the errand an excuse to get into touch with the wandering people. On reaching the tent they found them beginning breakfast, and the head of the family invited her to drink a cup of tea with them. " I will do that," she said, " if you will ask a blessing," which he reverently did, and Peggy drank the tea to Donald's lasting amazement.

Through the night she was in travail over the new birth of a soul into the kingdom of God, and in the morning she was along with her convert in the highways and hedges seeking the outcast and the lost.

During the later years of her life she suffered from a painful disease, which was eventually the cause of her death. She went to Strathpeffer almost every summer. Its waters helped her

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greatly. While there she visited Ferintosh and Redcastle at the time of their great communion gatherings, where she was the honoured guest of Dr. Macdonald and of Mr. Kennedy, and where she was the centre of a group of worthies. She had even conceived the idea of going to reside in the parish of Killearnan that she might be under "the latter rain" of Mr. Kennedy's ministry, and be also within easy reach of the healing waters of Strathpeffer Spa. Her purpose, however, was not realised.

Mr. Kennedy died on the 10th of January, 1841. Mrs. Mackay was then confined to bed in her last illness. When the news came, her husband resolved to withhold it from her. "With this resolution he entered the room, and sat down gloomily by the fire. 'I know what ails you,' his wife said to him, after he was seated. 'You have heard of Mr. Kennedy's death; I knew it before. 'He died,' she added, 'on Sabbath evening, and, mentioning a certain day, 'before then I will join him in the Father's house,' and so it was." *

When it became generally known that she was seriously ill, and that her end was approaching, many of her friends came from great distances to watch with and comfort her. One of them reported: "Perhaps the solemn scene was so truly grand that our age could not produce another instance wherein Christian fortitude and bravery shone so brilliant and conspicuous in and around a death bed." No sound of complaint or murmuring was heard from her during the whole course of her sufferings, which were often very acute. She longed, not so much for ease and rest from pain as for fitness for the life to which she was fast hastening. She longed for holiness of soul and spirit. "Patience, patience: Holiness,

* In the Days of the Fathers.

holiness: Purify me and take me away," were her ejaculations and prayers while passing through the shadow of death. She died as she lived by the faith of the Son of God who loved her.

Her friends asked her many questions, hoping that her replies would be a means of comfort to themselves and to others. These she answered with a clearness which proved that her mind remained unclouded to the end, and with a wisdom which showed how well taught she had been and how valuable were her views.

The prolonged struggle between Church and State which ended in the Disruption was raging at the time. "The Witness" kept her in constant touch with the progress of events. On being asked what she thought the issue would be, she replied: "'I will refine her but not with silver.' I do not think that the Lord will deliver the Church by means of money, or by great talents or great speeches made on her behalf. He has His own way of deliverance." That was two years before the Disruption took place.

When asked if Satan tempted her, now that she was so weak, she answered: "The Lord redeemed my soul by the blood of the everlasting covenant when I was young. That shut the door with a bang in his face, and all he can do now is to stand outside the back door, whispering in my ears, 'How great noise, but how little good you have done by your loud profession of religion all through your earthly life,' but is it not written, 'They overcame him through the blood of the Lamb'?"

As the time of her departure drew near, her spirit was consumed by an intense longing to depart and to be with Christ. That longing found expression in the language of Scripture. She was

heard to say repeatedly, " Why is His chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of His chariots? " There was no impatience, however, only a holy desire to be with her Lord.

The night before she passed away she called her husband and such of the family as were with them to her bedside, and, after bidding them an affectionate and an affecting farewell, she asked him to kneel with them in prayer before the Lord. When that touching act of dedication was over she said, and these were her last words, " There is only one Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. I travelled many a step through the wilderness seeking and following Him, which I do not regret. I kept an open breast to many, many who professed the Saviour, and who, I knew, were entire strangers to Him. I did so upon this ground, that I knew He could and would do much more abundantly in saving sinners than I could think of or comprehend."

" Shortly afterwards," sang Mr. Findlater, " the angels raised thee up on high, and the King received thee into His palaces, wearing a crown of excessive brilliance."

That was on the 15th of April, 1841, in the 73rd year of age. With solemn and affectionate reverence, she was buried in the Melness Cemetery, where her dust rests till the resurrection. " Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

The Righteous shall be in Everlasting Remembrance.

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